

Attract Teens to Your Library with an Anime and Manga Club!	2	Teens Mark Their Territory at Rosebud County Library	4	Developing a Young Adult Advisory Council at Great Falls Public Library	7
Teen Volunteers Add Value to Public Libraries	3	Tech-savvy Teens Share Expertise with Seniors	5	Teens and Magazines: What Are They Reading?	8
Marketing Magic: Connecting teens and library programs	4	Be Careful What You Wish For	6		

Montana Libraries and Montana's Young Adults: Natural Partners in Today's Information Age

By Darlene Staffeldt, Montana State Librarian



Library services for young adults seem to have turned a corner over the last couple of years. It wasn't that long ago that many librarians had all but given up on getting teens into the library, and those who hadn't given up sat around scratching their heads, wondering how to accomplish this.

Suddenly, however, libraries around the country and in Montana are reaching out to teens in ways that were previously both unheard and unthought of just a couple of years ago.

I'm not sure what spurred this exciting movement. Was it the Harry Potter series that initially ignited the fire, proving that, in fact, teens were interested in reading? Or has it been the influx of young librarians, many of whom are not so far removed from being teenagers themselves, into the field? Or, has it been libraries' move to relying so heavily on technology, something that today's teens have grown up with and depend on for everything from schoolwork to communicating with friends?

Today many libraries are very successful in getting teens to be regular library patrons and Montana

libraries are no exception. In this issue of *Big Sky Libraries*, we explore young adult services in Montana. You'll find everything here from programming ideas to marketing suggestions, from tips on how to get a teen advisory group together to developing a physical teen space within your library on a tight or non-existent budget. You'll also find tips and resources, such as an online guide to teen services in the 2.0 environment, that you can investigate further.

Whatever the budget, programming, services, or collection for young adults that a library has, it seems that some things remain constant in those libraries that best serve this population. Taken from the Young Adult Library Services Association's (YALSA's) vision statement, "... quality library service to young adults is provided by a staff that understands and respects the unique informational, educational, and recreational needs of teenagers. Equal access to information, services, and materials is recognized as a right, not a privilege. Young adults are actively involved in the library decision-making process. The library staff collaborates and cooperates with other youth-serving agencies to provide a holistic, community-wide network of activities and services that support healthy development."

You'll certainly see that vision statement playing out as a reality in the articles and photos featured in this issue of *Big Sky Libraries*. Hopefully, you'll put this issue down and feel inspired to try something new to better serve this important group of Montanans. If they're dedicated library users as teenagers, certainly that bodes well for the future of Montana libraries as our young people grow up and become the next leaders of our communities.

Meeting the Challenge of Working with Teens

By Linda McCulloch
Superintendent of Public Instruction

A master teacher once told me, 'The one that annoys you most, needs you the most.' I try to remember that in all my interactions with teenagers.

-Linette Ivanovich,
Missoula Public Library,
Young Adult Librarian



For 20 years, I was the school librarian to middle school young adults. For most of this time, I had kindergarten through eighth graders. I wouldn't have traded in the middle schoolers for anything. I loved their sense of humor, their wanting me to read aloud to them the new picture books as long as I didn't let anybody know about it, and the fact that they were old enough to know they have their whole lives ahead of them. At the same time, I wouldn't trade in those kindergarten hugs for anything either. Let's face it, eighth graders are our kindergartners with some mileage on them.

Young adult (YA) humans are some of the most smelly, most challenging, most endearing, exasperating, and least understood creatures on the planet. Too soon as adults we forget what it really is to experience the upheavals in emotional, intellectual, and physical development that occur between the ages of twelve and twenty-one. As adults, teachers, and librarians, we often throw up our hands at the contradictory behavior of our students and patrons. Young adults provide particular challenges as we look at developing effective instructional strategies and appropriate programming to meet the needs of this powerful group of individuals. Yes, they annoy us, but YAs need teachers, librarians and other adults to help them march confidently into their futures, and ours. One way to help them do just that is to recognize that YAs of the 21st Century have distinct and divergent needs



YOUR MONTANA LIBRARY >>>

continued from page 1
from preceding generations. It's pretty exciting if you think about it!

Young adults in the 21st Century ARE different from young adults of the 20th century. Marc Prensky, author of "Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants," stated "Today's students are no longer the people our educational system was designed to teach." He refers to the disconnect between students today and the industrial model of education that is pervasive nearly a decade into the 21st Century. Students come into schools and libraries with high expectations for how they will engage with information and technology. YAs have never lived in a world without computers, the Internet or cell phones. In order to engage students in continuous learning opportunities, schools and libraries must take into account how YAs use information and technology.

In fact, today's YAs don't think about "technology." When they think about science or math or language arts or communication, they assume "technology" is embedded. They have never known it to be any other way. For YAs "technology" is a given, much the same as cars were for past generations. It's folks our age that are still talking about "technology". That's the first thing we need to remember. I also know that I will never be able to "out thumb" a young adult while texting on my cell phone or on my BlackBerry.

So how do teachers and librarians get a pulse check on what kids today need and want from schools and libraries? Padraic McCracken, Teen Services Librarian at Lewis & Clark Library in Helena says "Talk to the kids. Listen to the kids. Trust the kids. Empower the kids. Advocate for the kids." Adults need to suspend their impulse to tell YAs what they should do and listen to what they have to say.

As we look forward to summer library events and planning YA services for the coming year, let's keep in mind that these students deserve special consideration for the things that make them unique as library patrons, students, and individuals. I encourage school librarians and public librarians to partner to provide activities that will engage and involve teens with reading and "technology." Work together to identify resources and personnel that can be combined to provide services that will benefit YAs. Include young adults in meaningful ways in the planning and implementation of programming. The payoff will be a generation of young library patrons who have been valued in their libraries and who will in turn value what libraries have to offer.

Attract Teens to Your Library with an Anime and Manga Club!

By Marth Furman, Public Services/Teen Services Librarian, Flathead County Library

Many librarians know that teens are an important group to include in programming at the library. But how does one decide which programs to offer? At Flathead County Library, we host a variety of teen events: a Teen Advisory Board that meets monthly, gaming events for Guitar Hero and Dance Dance Revolution, and occasional one-shot parties such as an Anti-Valentine's Day party or the popular Teens Take Over party, which is held after hours. All of these programs are well-attended by teens, but our most consistently successful program is the Akatsuki Club, our club devoted to anime and manga fans.

The Akatsuki Club (Akatsuki is the name of a nefarious crime organization in the popular Naruto series) meets once a month, and each meeting is devoted to a different activity related to manga, anime, or Japanese culture. At the first meeting, members discussed their favorite manga series and planned future events for the club, while making and eating candy sushi. Other recent events have included watching anime videos on YouTube, writing manga reviews for the library's Web site, and playing Anime Jeopardy. Club members are between the ages of 12 and 18, and we typically have about sixteen to twenty attendees at each event.



Both club members and the library system benefit from the success of the Akatsuki Club. Club members have enjoyed meeting new people; for some of them, it has been the first place where they've met others who are as excited as they are about manga. At club meetings, they also have the opportunity to learn about new manga and anime titles and suggest their favorites for the library collection. In turn, we learn about the titles that manga fans really want to read, and we hear about new titles coming out – often much faster than we would have found them in a review journal. Plus, when you ask teens for their opinion and then make decisions based on their input, they have some ownership in the library collections they use. That ownership leads to even more enthusiasm from the teens, and they have a greater sense of the library's desire to provide high interest materials.

Hosting an anime or manga club also brings teens into your library who may not have ever visited before. Word spreads amongst teenagers rather quickly, and here in Flathead County, we have

many new teens regularly visiting the library as a direct result of their participation in the club. Many of them have even become crossover participants at other teen programs. Our success with the Akatsuki Club has affected our library profoundly, both in teen services and in general. We have a growing teen fan base for our library, a collection that is better suited to our teen customers, and higher numbers of teenagers coming through the doors!



Members made and ate their own candy sushi!

Anime and Manga Links

- Anime Jeopardy
From RoseMary Honnold, author of 101 Teen Programs That Work.
<http://www.cplrmh.com/JeopardyGames.html>
- Operation Anime
This company provides free anime for public screening if your club has at least 20 members.
<http://www.operationanime.com/>
- Tokyopop: The Librarian's Guide to Manga
A brief manga lesson for librarians.
<http://www.tokyopop.com/aboutus/LibrarianGuide.pdf>

What are Anime and Manga?

Anime (ah-NIH-may) and manga are terms for Japanese animation. Both often cover more serious topics than the typical cartoon. In America, cartoons are considered a form of entertainment meant for children. In Japan, people of all ages watch anime and manga. Most shows and movies are centered for kids, adolescents, or young adults, but there are also many anime that are made for the older crowd, even businessmen. There are many genres in anime and manga with basic categories like comedy, romance, action, drama, and pornography (hentai). There are also anime with content meant specifically for boys (shounen), girls (shoujo), and businessmen.

Teen Volunteers Add Value to Public Libraries

By Ginny Cowan, Teen Librarian and Volunteer Coordinator, Bozeman Public Library

"Remember me?" the 20-something man queries as he steps up to the Children's Desk.

It has been a full three years, but how could I forget such a faithful, productive, tech-savvy volunteer? And to top it off, he had selflessly donated many hours of valued time while a busy high school student.

"Of course I do, Steve," I reply. "How are things going for you?"

Catching up with former volunteers is only one perk of being the teen volunteer program coordinator at Bozeman Public Library. I can't recommend the experience enough. If you're looking for a way to bring teens into your library, and to connect and reconnect with them over and over again, you can't go wrong by employing and mentoring teen volunteers.

For one thing, teen volunteer programs attract students at two diverse ends of the spectrum – high achievers looking for college application community service hours AND at-risk youth needing to fulfill court-ordered service hours. But these programs are also a good way to hook every teen in between, and to continuously build ownership of your library facilities and programs among young adult patrons.

Just ask Tom, Erika, Hannah, or Courtney. They happen to be members of our Teen Advisory Group, active teen volunteers, and some of the best ambassadors found at our

library. There's no better advertising for teen programs or library spaces than word of mouth, and these teens are masters when it comes to spreading the word.

Or ask Shane, whose court-ordered community service at our library gives him a place to belong and a sense of accomplishment. Collecting library recyclables, keeping the scrap paper stocked, and working outside on the grounds bolster his resume while satisfying his parole officer's requirements.

Everyone wins when it comes to teen volunteers in public libraries.



Just what's in it for teens?

Here at Bozeman Public Library, our constantly evolving teen volunteer program provides young people ages 14-18 with important interviewing and other job skills, community service hours, experience dealing with the public, and more. Siblings sometimes volunteer together and younger brothers/sisters often follow in the footsteps of their elder sibs. It's not unusual for a pair of teens to request time working together in the library. Then I'll often find them paging through classic picture books together or savoring Shel Silverstein poems as they shelve.

To successfully match teens with jobs, the jobs must contain at least one element that is immediately gratifying, be able to be done in a teen social group, be hands on, and make the teens feel as if they're making a meaningful contribution. Depending on the individual teen, preferences might include working alone or in a group, with people or with library materials, behind the

scenes or out with other patrons. The match is important, and must evolve with capabilities and interests. Keep the process and the responsibilities dynamic or I can guarantee you'll lose teen volunteers.

Just what's in it for librarians?

Teens can significantly augment your programming, materials management, collection development, and technical services if you give them the chance. In 2007, more than two dozen teens volunteered hundreds of hours at the Bozeman Public Library. They can literally energize the library facility, and may even infect the library staff with their enthusiasm.

At our library, tasks routinely accomplished by teen volunteers include, but are no means limited to:

- Shelving and organizing library materials of all types;
- Dusting, cleaning, and straightening;
- Alphabetizing and filing library card applications;
- Checking donated materials for our holdings;
- Maintaining the magnet art at the Children's Library entrance;
- Helping with arts and crafts, creative workshops, special events, and the Summer Reading Program;
- Cleaning up the grounds and planting flowers;
- Purging dated posters and maintaining the Community Bulletin Board;
- Compiling booklists of favorite titles, genres, or themes;
- Making recommendations for collection development by the Teen Librarian.

Uniquely teen issues

Working with teens need not be daunting. However, a "chill" attitude will serve the teen volunteer coordinator well. Flexibility is paramount; remember that academics, school activities, and social obligations will often take precedence over the volunteer commitment. Be ready for your teens' involvement to ebb and flow with finals schedules, school



sports, family plans, prom, and the like. And look to invest a fair bit of your own time – tracking hours, matching volunteers with tasks, writing recommendation letters, and just plain old supervising and mentoring.

Partnering with student community service programs, such as Key Club, National Honor Society, church or scout programs, and gold cards for high academic achievers, will help you recruit. And it's important to check with your Human Resources Department about the legal age for volunteering. Though many 10-13 year olds are long on time and willing to help with many tasks, here in Bozeman, the City Attorney applies child labor laws to determine the minimum volunteer age; therefore no one under 14 can officially volunteer.

All in all, the advantages of a vital, adaptive teen volunteer program far outweigh the time, energy, and resilience required to manage it. I remember this every time one of my former volunteers returns to the library to seek me out.

"Sure, I'll be happy to write you a letter of recommendation or even talk to them in person, Steve," I say. "Tell me a little bit more about the job and your interest in it."

Names have been changed so as not to embarrass our wonderful teen volunteers. For more information, contact Ginny Cowan at 406.582.2404 or gcowan@bozeman.net



Marketing Magic: Connecting Teens and Library Programs

By Joyce Doyle, Youth Services/Public Relations Librarian, Missoula Public Library

Don't you wish you could wave a magic wand and fill your teen programs with excited, energetic youth? Well, you can't. Fairy godmothers aside, nobody has a magic formula for attracting teenagers. But with a combination of offering the right programs and marketing the heck out of them, you can cast a small spell for success.

Get in their faces, and Facebooks

A teen program that's a flop one month can be a hit the next. What's the difference? It's in the marketing.

Not to knock traditional methods of press releases and posted flyers – both are essential techniques I employ regularly – but teens are most likely to listen when you get in their faces. Are you more likely to attend a program listed in the newspaper or a program you were personally invited to? Stop the teen you see making a beeline for the computers and give a one-sentence spiel on an upcoming event, and hand him a flyer while you're at it. It's straightforward, but an opportunity that gets missed far too often.

Another great chance for face-to-face marketing: school visits. Nothing gets in their faces like having their teacher force them to listen to you. A captive audience is a godsend for marketing. Be sure to bring handouts and a signup sheet for future email program alerts.

Finally, I'm not above using a little peer pressure to get my point across. Get teens you know to tout the next movie or readers club meeting to their friends. For that matter, do the same with the parents you see browsing while waiting for the kids. Use social networking like MySpace, Facebook, and blogs to reach beyond your normal audience scope. The more people you can get talking up the library, the more teens will hear you.

Repeat Business

Your work isn't done just because you got them to one program. First, you have to make sure they have fun. Then you have to bring them back for the next one.



At Missoula Public Library, we offer an array of programs such as writers groups, video gaming, poetry programs, book-to-movie events, and craft projects. Each one is a marketing opportunity. Every time you have an event, publicize the next program or new service with handouts and a quick announcement at the beginning and end of the current event. And don't forget that signup sheet to get their email addresses!

Sometimes the program is its own advertisement. The best way of deciding what kind of program array you want to offer is by asking the teens themselves. Our Young Adult Librarian took advantage of Teen Tech Week to offer an online media survey asking what videos and music the teens would like to have in the library. She plans to build off that survey and create an advisory committee to help select media materials. This is the perfect example of using new technology to reach out to teens who might not have otherwise taken part in the library, while simultaneously showing them we care about their interests. That's good marketing.

Even your building is a form of marketing. A comfortable space is a major factor in getting the teens back into the library after their first visit. It tells the teens what the library is about more than any words ever could. Missoula Public Library is redesigning the young adult space to offer a more welcoming atmosphere by adding walls and introducing comfortable seating areas to encourage them to spend time and relax. We're also introducing a YA Café monthly craft program aimed at defining the YA section as a place for creativity and individualism. Of course, you don't need a fancy space to offer something like this, just some ingenuity and energy. And we all know young adult librarians have that in abundance!

Attracting teens to library programming is not a matter of "if you offer it they will come." But if you offer it, and tell them about it, and remind them about it, and tell them again – they might stop by. And that's a bit of magic right there.

Library 2.0 Services to Teens - Best Practicies
http://www.libsuccess.org/index.php?title=Library_2.0_Best_Practices_to_Teens
Examples of blogs, myspace, podcasts, vodcasts, rss, and flickr accounts being used by libraries to connect with teens.

- Blogs for Teens - library blogs for teen patrons.
- Flickr for library Teens - A list of Flickr spaces for library teens.
- MySpace & Teens - a list of library MySpace profiles oriented towards teen patrons.
- Podcasts & Teens - a list of podcasts created through partnership with public libraries and teens.
- RSS & Teens - a list of libraries using RSS feeds to deliver digital content to teens.
- Vodcasts for Teens - a list of vodcasts used within teen library environments.

Teens Mark Their Territory at Rosebud County Library

By Cherie Heser, Director, Rosebud County Library

Chelsea Brauer, then a sophomore at Forsyth High School and a regular user and volunteer at Rosebud County Library, knew that she had to have an outstanding community service project for FCCLA (Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America). She asked a friend to join her, and they consulted with library staff and me to make a plan for a new teen center.

They began by surveying the students to make sure they met real needs and wants. After the survey results were in, they began planning the area. Along with state aid money offered by the library, they secured a grant that was used to buy furniture and equipment for the area. Then they had some really fun meetings with other students and me to choose and order comfy furniture (bag chairs, denim "rocker" chairs, a tall ice cream parlor type table and chairs, and a set of sectional chairs with a matching "coffee table.") They also ordered a large slat wall divider to define the outside corner of the area and to display new items of interest.

The library provided two non-Internet computers with software for homework help and enrichment



for various academic areas, as well as a CD/MP3 player. Chelsea and friends came up with posters and decorations, including painted lettering for "Teen Territory," their chosen name.

The second year was spent on implementation. The "grand opening" just after school started was a smashing success, with 45 students eating pizza and pop provided by the library, playing games, and having discussion groups on what they would like to do in the area. I even got a turn to introduce new books and other resources for teens. That night the students in attendance also got to choose 15 favorite authors for standing orders of their latest books from Ingram, financed by the library.

Every month during the school year, students plan an event, ranging from electronic games to board games to movies to really special events. A recent one that really drew a crowd featured Chelsea and friend

Derek Breeden doing presentations on their trips to Mexico and Spain, respectively, complete with foods from those countries and interactive games related to their presentations.

In March 2008, Derek hosted an electronic gaming tournament, complete with brackets, in which students played different games in four parts of the library. He arranged for food from parents and prizes from local businesses.



Students in grades 7-12 from Forsyth High School, Hysham High School, and Rosebud High School are welcome at any of these events. Chelsea has made a real effort to involve the younger students in planning, so that the programs and momentum will continue after her graduation this spring. Future plans include a mural by art students, more displays, some innovative programs, and more.

And what about the rest of the month? This area is always in use, mostly by teens after school and in the evening, relaxing with teen magazines and teen books, visiting, listening to music, and working on computers. The high ice cream table and chairs are very popular for sitting with laptops for studies or e-mail. An unexpected use happened when several families, including teens and preteens, started coming in to relax together in the comfy chairs and read ing together or separately.

This project won "Gold" at both state and national FCCLA conventions two years in a row, once for the planning stage, and once for the implementation stage. And of course, the students involved have wonderful community service records for college entrance and scholarship applications.



Tech-savvy Teens Share Expertise with Seniors

New Lewis and Clark Library program helps promote interaction between generations

By Alana Listoe, Helena Independent Record

Sharon Skagen, 60, got her cell phone about three years ago, but answering it was just about the extent of her cellular knowledge. That was until she spent a Sunday afternoon at the Lewis and Clark Library.

Skagen was among the Helena seniors who received technology instruction from teen tutors at the Lewis and Clark Library in Helena at a program called Teen Tech Tutors for Seniors.

Tech Tech Tutors for Seniors is a new program at the library that pairs Helena young people with seniors wanting to learn about e-mail, cell phones, digital cameras, or surfing the Web.

Skagen learned how to send a text message to her 13 year-old grandson in Rapid City, S.D., and how to take pictures with her cell phone.

"That phone does a whole bunch of stuff," she said. "Everything was explained to me nicely."

Pad McCracken, teen services librarian, said the program is something other libraries have been successful at and the need seemed apparent in Helena.

"Seniors need the help," he said, "and with kids it's second nature."

McCracken said the side benefit is the interaction of Helena's senior citizens with the community's young people.

"It's neat," he said of watching the interaction.

Jerin Stanger, Capital High School senior, enjoys working with older people.



"It's interesting to hear their perspectives on computers," she said. "Some seem frustrated, but they want to learn."

Dora Maynard brought her digital camera to the library and Sam Grassy, a Helena Middle School eighth-grader, happily assisted her.

"The instructions on this camera are something else," she said. "I just wanted someone to show me how to do it."

She left feeling a bit more educated about her purple Polaroid and says she'll soon be taking pictures of her grandchildren and scenery.

McCracken said the library is considering more Teen Tech Tutors for Seniors sessions, but haven't scheduled any yet.

Teens and Technology

- Gaming Lists & Activities - sponsored by the YALSA Teen Gaming Interest Group http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Gaming_Lists_%26_Activities
- Selected Videos and DVDs - sponsored by the Selected Videos and DVDs Committee http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Selected_Videos_and_DVDs
- YALSA's Social Networking Tools <http://del.icio.us/bstef87>
- Teen Tech Week (March 2-8, 2008) - sponsored by YALSA's Teen Tech Week Committee http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Teen_Tech_Week
- Teen Tech Guides - sponsored by Teen Tech Week committee http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Teen_Tech_Guides
- Web 2.0 & Libraries - sponsored by YALSA's Technology for YA Committee http://wikis.ala.org/yalsa/index.php/Web_2.0_%26_Libraries

Be Careful What You Wish For

by Renee McGrath, Director, North Valley Public Library

In 2006, the North Valley Public Library in Stevensville embarked on a long-range planning process using the Public Library Association's Planning for Results model. We gathered together a committee of community leaders to discuss what they perceived to be the needs of our community. And we brainstormed about what kind of a role the library could play in meeting those needs. From these discussions, the library board approved four service priorities that we've used to drive decisions about the programs and services that we offer.

Beyond the official service priorities, however, we have also given a lot of weight to the discussions that were held with the community members as part of our long-range planning process. One of the topics that came up in those discussions was that there is no place in town for teenagers to hang out. Our community leaders were concerned about the lack of opportunities for teens and thought that the library might be able to play a role in meeting that need.

It has been a challenge for us to improve young adult services due to funding and staffing limitations. While the residents in our library district approved a mill levy increase in 2006, we didn't actually receive any funding from that increased mill levy until the end of December 2007, and we still do not have adequate funding to pay for a youth services position.

Our two full-time staff members are "on the desk" during all hours the library is open, with the exception of a few hours a week that we bring in substitute staff to cover so that the regular staff can attend staff meetings, and work on off-desk projects like cataloging, online training, and the processing of Interlibrary Loan requests. So we have not had any time to plan specific young adult programs.

Nonetheless, we did want the library to be a more welcoming place to young adults, so we've been slowly taking baby steps to try to address the needs of teenagers in the library.

First, we weeded the young adult collection and changed its focus to include primarily titles of interest to older teens. We try to keep fiction that deals with "young adult issues" such as sex, violence, drug use, and other moral concerns in the young adult collection. Titles that have teenage characters but do not deal with more mature themes may be shelved in the juvenile collection.

We do this for two reasons: when teenagers or parents tell us that they do not want to be exposed to controversial issues, we can steer them towards the juvenile collection and feel



confident that they will still find books that will meet their needs. And when younger teens are ready to read about more mature themes, we know that they will find their way to our young adult collection.

We also moved the young adult collection from the back of the library (see "before" photos 1&2) to an area that is closer to the Internet terminals and comfortable seating areas that teenagers tend to use. This area is closer to the checkout desk, which allows us to keep an eye on things, but it is also a noisier part of the library anyway, so normal teenage behavior is less likely to interfere with patrons who want to do quiet library work.

When we moved the young adult collection, we also separated our young adult series from the general YA fiction to make them easier for kids to identify, and included lots of face-out shelving and comfortable seating in the new young adult space, which does seem to be drawing in a lot more teenagers. (See "after" photos)

The new young adult space is sandwiched between our public access Internet stations and our audiovisual department and is adjacent to a comfortable seating area right in front of the check out desk where teens have traditionally congregated. We are looking forward to decorating our new YA area with posters that will appeal to teens and hope to be able to move a computer into the young adult area for teens to use to play games in the future.

Since making the changes listed above (and joining the Montana Shared Catalog and Part-

ners), we estimate that the use of the library by teenagers has increased about fourfold. While we used to have 4-5 young adults hanging around at the library every day, we now regularly have 20 teens or more in the after-school hours.

For a small public library, this is a noticeable change, and although we are happy to see an increase in teenagers in the library, it has also posed some challenges.

Young adults can be loud, and they don't always use nice language. They tend to congregate, particularly around the computer stations, which, in our library, are already crowded. They are also often more physical than adults and sometimes push or kick (or kiss) each other, just for fun.

These behaviors are not always easy for library staff and other patrons to get used to. We frequently have adult patrons comment on our "after-school babysitting service," or the teenagers that are "taking over the library." We have had a few unpleasant encounters between teenagers and patrons (and in one case, a board member) and we have had at least one incident involving teenagers using library computers to send pornographic SPAM from the e-mail address of another teen (without her knowledge).

Library staff has become adept at setting boundaries, giving clear warnings and following through with consequences if patron behavior isn't respectful and appropriate to a library environment. We try to approach teenagers with the same level of respect that we would our adult patrons and have found that we have greater success when we do so. We try to be firm and consistent in enforcing our policies, but we also "pick our battles" – allowing the volume level to increase when there are no adults (or other patrons) trying to do quiet work in the area where young adults are congregating, for example.

In exchange, we are often able to recruit teen volunteers to assist at library events, help us move furniture, or even take out the garbage! When we are ready to move forward with a



Developing a Young Adult Advisory Council at Great Falls Public Library

By Nola Huey, Youth Services Librarian, Great Falls Public Library

young adult advisory council, we know it won't be hard to recruit teenagers to participate. And perhaps most importantly, we know we are doing our part to provide a safe, comfortable environment where teens can feel welcome in our community.

We know that teens are the adults of the future, and that their impressions about public libraries

After



ies are being formed now. We know that we can learn from them about the directions that our libraries need to be heading in order to keep up in an increasingly technological world. And even though their behaviors can pose challenges for library staff and other patrons, we try to remember that adolescence is a difficult time of life and that the teens that come into our libraries may be grappling for the first time with many of the important issues that are addressed in young adult literature. We hope that they will find the library to be a safe place to do so. One of the most important factors that predict success in life for teenagers is having a non-parental adult that is a positive influence in their lives. Who better to provide this service but a librarian?

My vision to include teen programming at Great Falls Public Library became reality in January 2006. Yes, I aspired to develop teen programming. I think young adults are awesome and working with them takes lots of energy and a youthful spirit. The challenge before me was connecting with teens and getting them involved in the library. Thus began my investigation to develop a teen advisory board.

My first step towards development of a Young Adult Advisory Council, what we now call YAAC, was subscribing to Pubyac (a listserv designed specifically for youth services librarians) and reading articles in Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA). I quickly discovered that I did not have to recreate the proverbial wheel. VOYA introduced me to Diane P. Tuccillo's book *Library Teen Advisory Groups* (Review in *School Library Journal*, 2005), which provides valuable information, guidelines, and contacts.

Next, I located examples of other advisory council's mission statements, applications, and member qualifications, requirements, and duty descriptions. After adapting wording and content to reflect GFPL, I felt I was prepared to convince teens to join but I still needed an 'attention-getter'. Fortunately, for me, an in-house stack rearrangement project provided the perfect 'teen-attention-getter': the creation of a young adult area and our need for teenagers input.

Therefore, on January 31, 2006, we held our first YAAC meeting. Not only did the thirteen teens help design our wonderful Teen Scene but they also became my core members. During this meeting, I presented the adjusted wording and content examples and the young adults discussed and then selected phrasing and formats for the mission statement, application, and member qualifications, requirements, and duty descriptions.

During the first two years of YAAC, I have learned many things about interacting with teenagers--one being that recordkeeping is vital. Therefore, I created four additional tools that have made organizing this energetic group easier. First, I downloaded a template for a simple postcard, which I send bi-monthly to remind members of upcoming dates. Secondly, is the attendance roster I created in Excel. Third, is a generic note taking form a YAAC member uses to record minutes. Lastly, our quarterly newsletter, provided as a communication link to our Young Adult publication, not only includes YAAC member's book-reviews and event announcements, but also a new book list.



YAAC members in Teen Scene they helped design.

In conclusion, the initial time and energy I expended to plan young adult programming has been beneficial because more teens are utilizing the library's services. Young adult material circulation is up and attendance at special events is wonderful. I have even overheard several pre-teens comment that they are anxious for the day when they can become official YAAC members.

Great Falls Public Library - YOUNG ADULT ADVISORY COUNCIL

MISSION STATEMENT

The Great Falls Public Library's Young Adult Advisory Council (YAAC) is made up of 7th through 12th grade volunteers in Great Falls and Cascade County. YAAC's mission is to encourage teen library involvement to ensure the ongoing development of young adult programming and the teen library collection. Meetings are held from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month, September through May.

YAAC Membership Qualifications:

- Must have completed sixth grade
- Must be a Cascade County resident
- Must be willing to volunteer a minimum of 6 hours
- Must be able to fulfill the responsibilities of a YAAC member
- Must enjoy working with others as a team
- Should be interested in the library and improving library services to teens

YAAC Membership Requirements:

- To apply for membership
- To commit to nine months (September

- through May) volunteer service
- To attend a minimum of 6 meetings
- To attend special Young Adult programs and activities
- To vote and decide as a group what projects and programs to undertake
- To participate in fund-raisers throughout the year as needed
- To write a minimum of one book review each fiscal year
- To assist in program preparations and clean-up
- To encourage library involvement and promote summer reading

- To have fun and build friendships

YAAC Membership Duties include helping the Youth Services Librarian:

- Design teen-oriented displays to promote reading
- Determine current teen trends and interests
- Lead book discussions
- Plan, prepare, and present original quarterly activities
- Raise funds for programming and special events
- Select Young Adult materials

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Montana State Library
1515 East Sixth Avenue
PO Box 201800
Helena, MT 59620-1800
phone: (406) 444-3115
toll free in MT: (800) 338-5087
TDD: (406) 444-3005
fax: (406) 444-0266
<http://msl.mt.gov>
msl@mt.gov

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Sara Groves, Editor - sgroves@mt.gov
Stacy Bruhn, Designer
This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. 1,100 copies of this newsletter were published.

:@ - Teen Messaging

Ever wonder what they're saying? Try some of these more cryptic text and gaming messages.

2MI	Too much information
4EA3	Forever and ever
AAS	Alive and smiling
AOTA	All of the above
B/F	Boyfriend
CD9	Code 9 (parents are around)
F2F	Free to talk
LMIRL	Let's meet in real life
n00B	Newbie
OL	Old lady
OTO	Out of the office
POS	Parent over shoulder
PTMM	Please tell me more
RMMM	Read my mail man
ROTFL	Rolling on the floor laughing
SPST	Same place, same time
SWMBO	She who must be obeyed (wife or partner)
T+	Think positive
:@	What???



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Teens and Magazines: What Are They Reading?

As excerpted from the YALSA Teen Market Profile
<http://www.magazine.org/content/files/teenprofile04.pdf>

Teens read a wide variety of magazines, especially those or including those that are targeted to their own particular interests, life stage, and gender. When examining the titles that teens read, whether it be by circulation or by percentage of audience, a few distinctive features emerge, such as:

- Teens read a variety of magazine types, ranging from fashion to automotive to electronic games.
- Teens read about their leisure pursuits. Many of the titles that are popular among teens are enthusiast titles.
- Gender is a major driver of magazine title selection.

Magazines Outperform Top 25 Shows in Reaching Teens

Though the perception may be that teens are geared toward television, the reality is that magazines offer high reach to teens. Initiative recently released a crossmedia comparison (a report that adds up the ratings of each of the top 25 vehicles in both media) and found that the top 25 magazines lead against the top 25 prime-time TV programs in reaching teens 12 to 17.

Teen Girls By Percent (%)*

1.	YM	46.9
2.	Seventeen	35.7
3.	Teen People	35.6
4.	Allure	16.2
5.	Vibe	12.2
6.	In Style	11.2
	Glamour	11.2
7.	Marie Claire	10.9
8.	Vogue	10.3
9.	Source	10.3
10.	Self	10.0
11.	Cosmopolitan	9.9



Teen Boys By Percent (%)*

1.	Dirt Rider	30.4
2.	Four Wheeler	20.7
3.	WWE Magazine	19.7
4.	4 Wheel & Off Road	19.5
5.	Motorcyclist	19.4
6.	Sport Truck	18.8
7.	Popular Hot Rodding	18.4
8.	Car Craft	17.9
9.	Street Rodder	17.1
10.	Truckin'	17.1
11.	Cycle World	16.4

*Base: U.S. Population Age 12+ Source: MRI TwelvePlus 2003

Did You Know?

Teens who read magazines are engaged in more activities, ranging from sports to music to organized interests, than Teens who do not read magazines.